

<b>District of Columbia Department of Employment Services Program Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)</b>	
<b>Status:</b> <b>DRAFT</b>	<b>Subject:</b> <b>Career Center Operations</b>
<b>Date of Issuance:</b> December 16, 2011	<b>Revision Date:</b>
<b>Effective Date:</b> January 16, 2011	<b>Project Director:</b> <b>Associate Director, District American Job Centers</b>
<b>Office/Division/Program Reference:</b> <b>ONE-STOP CAREER CENTER SYSTEM</b>	<b>Next Review Date:</b> December 9, 2011

### **SCOPE**

The District's One-Stop Career Center system operates under the guiding principles as mandated by WIA. WIA reformed a number of federal laws and job training programs to create a comprehensive workforce investment system. The reformed system is intended to be customer-focused, to give citizens access to the tools they need to manage their careers, and to match employers with skilled workers.

### **PURPOSE**

The primary role of the District's One-Stop Career Center system is to connect area employers with job seekers, and link customers to vocational education, community colleges, and other training opportunities. DCNetworks is an integral part of this system. DCNetworks embodies DCNetworks.org's "No Wrong Door" approach to services and reflects the District's emphasis on integrated and coordinated service delivery.

### **PROGRAM PROCEDURES/IMPLEMENTATION**

The operation of One-Stop Career Centers are founded in the WIA law, which embodies seven key principles. They are:

- a. Streamlined services – Programs and providers will co-locate, coordinate and integrate activities and information, whenever possible, so the system as a whole is integrated and accessible for individuals and businesses alike.
- b. Empowering individuals - Eligible adults are given Individual Training Accounts (ITA's) to pay for education and training at qualified institutions. Participants chart their own employment course and select their training providers, based on performance information. They are further empowered through the advice, guidance, and support from One-Stop Career Center staff and partners.
- c. Universal access. Any individual may access the One-Stop system and core employment-related services. Information about job vacancies, career options, student financial aid, relevant employment trends, and instruction on how to conduct a job search, write a resumé, or interview with an employer is available to any job seeker or other person who wants to advance his or her career.
- d. Increased accountability. The goal of the Act is to increase employment, retention, and earnings of participants, and in doing so, improve the quality of the workforce to sustain economic growth, enhance productivity and competitiveness, and reduce welfare dependency. Consistent with these goals, WIA identifies core indicators of performance that state and local

entities managing the workforce investment system must meet. States exceeding the performance levels can receive incentive funds. Training providers and their programs also must demonstrate successful performance to remain eligible to receive federal funds.

- e. Strong role for local workforce investment boards and the private sector. With leadership from local business leaders, the workforce investment board is focused on strategic planning, policy development and oversight of the local workforce development system. Business and labor have an immediate and direct stake in the quality of the workforce investment system. Their active involvement is critical to the provision of essential data on what skills are in demand, what jobs are available, what career fields are expanding, and the identification and development of programs that best meet local employer needs.
- f. State and local flexibility. States and localities have increased flexibility, with significant authority reserved for the Governor (mayor) and elected officials, to build on existing reforms and tailor programs to meet the particular needs of local and regional labor markets.

One- Stop Career Center managers are to ensure that staffing specialists are trained and possess the tools, information and abilities to use DCNetworks effectively and efficiently. Procedures include, but are not limited to:

- a. Entering customer data in a timely manner
- b. Determining customer eligibility for each service/title
- c. Communicating with customers and training providers, including notification of approval to start training
- d. Collecting payments and preparing various administrative documents
- e. Recording case notes and comments, as activities occur
- f. Obtaining copies and recording certificates or documentation of achievement
- g. Following up on customers to make sure their experience with DOES is satisfactory
- h. Assisting customers in finding suitable and self-sustaining employment

DOES employees should refer to the DCNetworks User Manual provides for specific and detailed procedures on customer entry and case management responsibilities. The manual can be accessed in DCNetworks via the Staff On-Line Reference Link.

### **Universal Access**

Under WIA, all individuals are entitled to a range of “core” services, which are defined as services available to adults or dislocated workers through the One-Stop delivery system. At a minimum, core services must include:

- a. Eligibility determinations;
- b. Intake (which may include worker profiling) and orientation to other services available through the One-Stop system;
- c. Initial assessment of skill levels, aptitudes, abilities, and supportive service needs;
- d. Job search and placement assistance, and where appropriate, career counseling; employment statistics information, including accurate information on local, regional, and national labor market areas;
- e. Performance information and program costs for training providers of training services, including providers of adult education, postsecondary vocational education activities, vocational education activities available to school dropouts, and vocational rehabilitation program activities;

- f. Information about local workforce investment system performance and any additional performance information with respect to the one-stop delivery system in the local area;
- g. Accurate information related to the availability of supportive services, including child care and transportation, available in the local area, and referral to such services, as appropriate;
- h. Information regarding filing claims for unemployment compensation;
- i. Assistance in establishing eligibility for welfare-to-work activities and financial aid for training and education programs not funded under WIA, and
- j. Follow up services, including counseling regarding the workplace, for participants in workforce investment activities placed in unsubsidized employment, for not less than 12 months after the first day of the employment, as appropriate.

### **Integrated Service**

One-Stop Career Center services are offered with the participation and cooperation of a number of partners. In addition to federally mandated partners, such as Veterans Employment Services and Title V Older Worker programs, District One-Stop partners include community and technical colleges, secondary educational institutions, vocational rehabilitation, welfare, social service, and economic development agencies, as well as community- and faith-based organizations. Wherever possible, programs and providers are to collocate, coordinate and integrate activities and information, so that services are synchronized and accessible for individuals and businesses alike.

DOES integrated service is guided by four, primary workforce functions:

- a. The Unemployment Insurance system – the payment of benefits to eligible individuals and the collection of employer taxes.
- b. The Wagner-Peyser Job Service – a publicly funded labor exchange system that matches job seekers with job openings.
- c. The adult programs – providing training to dislocated workers and economically disadvantaged individuals with barriers to employment.
- d. The Labor Market Information (LMI) system – the gathering and generation of data in accordance with procedures developed by the USDOL in areas such as employment and wage comparisons, local area employment and unemployment statistics, and high/low growth occupations.

DOES engages in the following activities to accomplish its goals and advance the purpose of the One-Stop Career Centers:

- a. Participates in advisory committee and subcommittee activities, including monthly front-line staff team meetings;
- b. Develops and operates an integrated case management system;
- c. Develops and disseminates orientation material that clearly communicates all services to the public, and directs customers to appropriate agency resources;
- d. Regularly conducts program review and expansion projects, including capacity-building activities;
- e. Employs a strategic customer satisfaction/ improvement plan, and
- f. Negotiates Memoranda of Understanding (MOU's) and monitors performance by each One-Stop Career Center partner.

## **Customer Choice**

Informed customer choice is a fundamental principle of the WIA. One-Stops provide information about jobs and job requirements and the training needed to prepare for employment in an occupational area of choice. DOES maintains a list of qualified and certified training providers offering a variety of educational and occupational programs. Employment specialists guide customers through core and intensive services and help them select an appropriate academic or vocational training facility or professional.

After receiving core and intensive services, completing an on-line training eligibility application and in consultation with employment specialists, eligible participants use the DCNetworks system to access a list of eligible providers and educational services. The site provides geographically-based information on:

- a. Training Providers and Schools – users select this option to link to web sites and to locate specific providers and schools, and the programs offered;
- b. Training Education Programs – users select this option to find training or educational programs related to an occupation or field of interest;
- c. Education Program Completers – this option allows users to review the number of students that complete training and education programs, and
- d. Financial Aid for Training – this option provides potential sources of financial assistance for schools and programs.

## **Priority of Service**

The Workforce Investment Act states that in the event funds allocated to a local area for adult employment and training activities are limited, priority for intensive and training services under Title I adult funds must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income individuals in the local area. Federal priority of service guidelines apply to Title I adult funds only. Funds allocated for dislocated workers are not subject to this requirement (20 CFR 663.610).

The following policies will be applied District-wide for the use of Title I adult funds under the WIA:

- a. When Title I funds to serve adults are determined to be limited, priority for services must be given to recipients of public assistance and other low-income adults as set forth in Section 101(25) of the Act;
- b. When One-Stop Career Center managers accept all customers, priority will be given to District residents or those dislocated from an employer in the District of Columbia;
- c. The priority of service policy does not prohibit One-Stop Career Centers from providing intensive services to individuals other than District residents, and
- d. Residency may not be used for priority of service regarding core services. Core services shall be universally available to all adults and dislocated workers regardless of where they live.

The guidelines will be amended as DOES policy or local or federal law is amended.

Submitted for Approval:

Director's Comments:

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- Approved
- Disapproved

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Director's Signature  
Lisa Maria Mallory

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Date